

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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1. The Central Directorate of the Volga-Kama Basin (Tsentralkoye Upravleniye Volzhsko-Kamskogo Basseyina) was a central directorate (TsUpr) of the Ministry of the River Fleet and was subordinate to the MRF minister through the MRF second deputy minister . The administration of this TsUpr 25X1 comprised several sections and employed a staff of approximately 50 (15 of them engineers). This TsUpr organized MRF transport in the Volga-Kama region.
2. The following eight steamship companies were subordinate to the Central Directorate of Volga-Kama Basin:
 - a. The Volga Freight Steamship Company
 - b. The Volga Freight Passenger Steamship Company
 - c. The Volga State Petroleum Steamship Company
 - d. The Kama Steamship Company
 - e. The Moscow-Volga Steamship Company
 - f. The Moscow-Oka Steamship Company
 - g. The Belaya River Steamship Company
 - h. The Vyatka River Steamship Company

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The Volga Freight Steamship Company (Volzhskoye Gruzovoye Rechnoye Parokhodstvo --- VGRP)

3. This was one of the largest river freight steamship companies in the USSR and had a transport capacity of 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 tons per navigational year. The administration was located in Gorkiy. This company operated on the Volga River from Astrakhan' to Yaroslavl'. Main ports on this shipping line were: Astrakhan', Stalingrad, Saratov, Kuybyshev, Gorkiy, Yaroslavl', and the landings (pristani) Krasnoarmeysk and Sarepta. Cargoes consisted mainly of construction materials, timber (from Kama down to Volga, some going further to the Caspian Sea and Baku), grain to Upper Volga, fish (from Astrakhan' upstream), and salt (from Stalingrad, Saratov, and Lake Baskunchak down to Astrakhan' and the Upper Volga).
4. The VGRP fleet numbered approximately 250 self-propelled ships --- mainly tugboats --- and 250 barges. The main type of tug used in this company was wheel-propelled with a steam engine of Compound make capable of 600-800 hp at 30-35 rpm. These tugs were usually equipped with two boilers of the Corneville type, and, when empty, had a downstream speed of 12-15 km per hour and an upstream speed of six to eight kilometers per hour. The VGRP probably had about 150 of this general type of tug.
5. Another newer type of tug introduced after World War II had two propellers and two diesel engines /type unknown/. The total engine capacity of these newer tugs was 800 hp with 250 rpm. Their downstream speed (empty) was 22 km per hour; upstream, 10 to 12 km per hour. ^{25X1} these tugs were manufactured at Zavod Imeni Zhdanova in Gorkiy. The VGRP had approximately 50 such tugs. The remainder of the self-propelled tugs were various older types. In addition, the fleet possessed a few new tugs and self-propelled barges received as reparations from Germany after World War II. The self-propelled barges were mostly 800-1,500-ton vessels, with diesel engines of 500-600 hp and a downstream speed (empty) of 18 km; upstream, 10 km. Altogether the VGRP may have had 20 to 30 of these barges.
6. Fifty per cent of the barges belonging to VGRP were of the old type, with a wooden hull of approximately 3,000 tons displacement. The remainder were steel barges with a displacement of 5,000 tons, manufactured either at Kolomenskiy Zavod near Moscow (referred to either as "Kolomenka" or sometimes as the "Esherwood" type) and those manufactured at Mordovshchiki Shipyard.
7. The main ship repair yards belonging to VGRP were located in Kuybyshev and Gorkiy. Gross returns of VGRP industrial installations in 1951 amounted to 50,000,000-60,000,000 rubles. It should be kept in mind, however, that every year approximately 40% of the vessels did not enter ship repair yards for overhaul, but repaired their own ships, using their permanent crews for labor. This would mean that every year only 60% of the VGRP fleet used the ship repair facilities of VGRP.

The Volga Freight-Passenger Steamship Company (Volzhskoye Gruzopassazhirskoye Rechnoye Parokhodstvo --- VGPRP)

8. This steamship company was created in 1948 when three then existing steamship companies --- the Upper, Middle, and Lower Volga Freight-Passenger Steamship Companies with administrations in Gorkiy, Kuybyshev, and Stalingrad --- were merged. This company maintained freight and passenger transports on the Volga River from Astrakhan' to Yaroslavl'. VGPRP had its own regional directorates (Rayonnoye Upravleniye) in all larger cities along the Volga River which had tasks similar to those of maritime freight and passenger agencies.

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9. There were three types of transport performed by VGPRP: suburban (prigorodnyy), local (mestnyy), and long distance (dal'niy). Special fleets were assigned to take care of each type of transport as follows:
- a. Suburban transport was performed by "river streetcars", which were small propeller-type steam or diesel ships which had a capacity of up to 250 passengers. Newer types of these "river streetcars" were equipped with diesel engines made by ChTZ (Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant); in Astrakhan' there were several such ships belonging to VGPRP; they were called the ODESSA, MOSKVA, SEVASTOPOL, and STALINGRAD. Almost all suburban ships had engines of up to 200 hp; some older types had wooden hulls. Freight transport on suburban lines was insignificant, if any. the VGPRP had about 200 ships operating in its suburban lines; in Astrakhan' alone there were about two or three dozen such ships.
 - b. The local transport vessels operated in the ports and other populated localities within an oblast. Local lines were sometimes 100-150 km. long. Passenger ships with a capacity of 600-800 passengers, and corresponding freight vessels, operated on such lines. Ships used in this category were mostly of pre-Revolutionary manufacture, of the propeller (two propellers) or wheel type, and were equipped with steam engines of 500-600 hp at 250 rpm. These steam engines were mainly of Compound make; boilers were of the Scotch type. A majority of these ships had two decks; the upper deck was open and had no cabins. The wheel-type ships also had Compound make engines of 600 hp at 35 rpm, with no reverse gear. These ships mostly belonged to the former Samolet Volga Steamship Co., which was nationalized after 1917. Altogether there were probably about 80-100 local transport ships in VGPRP.
 - c. Long distance transport was performed by two types of ships; the first was the old, pre-Revolutionary Samolet ships which had two decks (both equipped with cabins), a passenger capacity of 1,000-1,200 persons, and corresponding freight space. These old ships were normally of the wheel-type and were equipped with steam engines of 900 hp at 35-40 rpm. The other group was composed of newer ships of both the wheel and propeller types; some had diesel and some steam engines. The steam engine, propeller-type ships had two propellers and a Compound steam engine of 800-900 hp at 250 rpm. They were manufactured in the twenties, most probably in Sormovo shipyard. Diesel, propeller-type ships had two propellers and two four-cycle MAN diesel engines of 400 hp each at 250 rpm. There were also a very few wheel-type, diesel ships equipped with two MAN diesel engines manufactured in Sormovo. Diesel engines on such ships were of 400 hp each and were equipped with mechanical reduction gears which reduced 250 rpm's of the main shaft to 35-40 rpm. In all, the VGPRP had about 30 to 40 long-distance transport ships.
10. In addition to the Volga route, the VGPRP also operated on the Akhtuba River, which is actually a branch of the Volga reaching from Stalingrad to the Caspian Sea. All transport on this river was the responsibility of the VGPRP Regional Administration in Astrakhan'. Small tugs and cutters carrying up to 200 passengers operated on this river. There were no harbors or ports. The only facilities provided were wooden landings and primitive piers, as follows:
- a. Durnovskiy Zaton (Durnovo) --- equipped with a wooden pier. Durnovskiy Zaton was often referred to as Timber Bay (Lesnaya Gavan'). No loading and unloading facilities were available.

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When there was a need for it, a floating crane was sent from Astrakhan'. One lighter (an old wooden hull ship with dismantled engine) was permanently located at the Durnovskiy Zaton Roadsteads. This lighter was approximately 40 m. long, four meters wide, and three meters above the water. Passenger traffic to Durnovskiy Zaton was rather small, mostly because it was a large timber storage and trade center. Timber came to Durnovskiy Zaton from the Kama River and the Upper Volga in floats, was classified in Durnovskiy Zaton, and sold to clients who took it further south to Makhachkala, Baku, or to Astrakhan'. The main customers for timber in Durnovskiy Zaton were VolgaTanker, ReydTanker, Kasp-Tanker, and Astrakhan's GorTop (Hard Fuel Administration). This timber storage and trading center in Durnovskiy Zaton had to be organized because there was no available space or adequate facilities for this purpose in Astrakhan'. In addition, it was prohibited to bring large timber floats (sometimes amounting to 10,000³ m. in a single float) beneath the Volga bridge in Astrakhan'. Thus large timber floats were driven to Durnovskiy Zaton, where they were broken into smaller floats, sold to clients, and floated further downstream. The largest timber float allowed to pass under the Volga bridge was one of 1,000 cu. m.

- b. Yenotayevsk --- there was a wooden landing and a lighter here as in Durnovskiy Zaton. There was also a limited passenger traffic. No loading and unloading facilities were available.
 - c. Chernyy Yar --- Of similar importance and facilities as in paragraph 10, b/.
 - d. Vladimirovka --- facilities: one wooden landing and a lighter. This was a rather large fish-trading center and had a fish cannery where the fishermen delivered their catch. There were also some salt warehouses for the salt which came from Verkhniy Baskunchak. One floating clamshell crane was permanently assigned to Vladimirovka.
 - e. Kapustin Yar --- facilities: one wooden landing and one lighter. Passenger transport was increasing here, but freight traffic was insignificant. After 1949 the traffic of military personnel became quite noticeable.
 - f. Krasnaya Sloboda --- equipped with a wooden landing and lighter. Local freight and passenger transport was handled here.
 - g. Stalingrad --- facilities unknown. There was a regional administration (Eksploataatsionnyy Uchastok) of VolgaTanker here, which was equipped with two 300-ton per hour capacity pumps for trans-loading POL products.
11. Traffic on the Volga River south of Stalingrad was much heavier than that north of Stalingrad, due both to the fisheries and local transports on the Lower Volga. This traffic was as follows:
- a. From Stalingrad to Astrakhan', Tuymazy oil, grain, potatoes, machinery.
 - b. From the Upper Volga came large quantities of construction materials going to Stalingrad; much of it especially for the construction of the huge hydro-electric power plant which is still under construction in Stalingrad. 25X1
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 - c. From Astrakhan' to Stalingrad cargoes consisted mainly of oil, salt, fish, beer, vegetables, raw cotton (Krasnovodsk), and scrap iron from Astrakhan'.

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d. Large quantities of timber went from Stalingrad to the Caspian Sea ports.

12. The main ship repair facilities of VGPRP were located in Kuybyshev and Astrakhan'. The gross output of VGPRP ship repair yards in 1951, including repairs done by regular crews, amounted to 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 rubles.

The Volga State Petroleum Steamship Company (Volzhskoye Gosudarstvennoye Naftenalivnoye Parokhodstvo --- VolgaTanker)

13. This company operated on the Volga River from Astrakhan' to Gorkiy and was equipped with 90 self-propelled ships and 100 petroleum barges which were capable of transporting 9,000,000 tons of POL products annually.

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The Kama Steamship Company (Kamskoye Parokhodstvo)

14. The central directorate of this steamship company was, in all probability, located in Molotov. The transport capacity was 3,000,000-3,500,000 tons per navigational year. In general, cargoes carried by this company consisted of grain, timber, potatoes (from Volga into Kama region), and various construction materials. The fleet of the Kama Steamship Company consisted of approximately 50 tugboats and passenger ships, and 90 barges. Tugboats were of the wheel-type, with steam engines of 800 to 900 hp. Wood was used for fuel. These tugs were often used to tug timber floats down the Kama and Volga rivers all the way to the Caspian Sea. The Kama Steamship Co. owned approximately 15 tugboats; passenger ships (approximately 10 of them) were mostly of the old Samolet type.
15. The main ship repair facilities of the Kama Steamship Co. were located in Molotov and Kamskoye Ust'ye. The gross output of the Kama Steamship Co. ship repair yards in 1951 amounted to 15,000,000-18,000,000 rubles.

The Moscow-Volga Canal Steamship Company (Parokhodstvo: Moskva-Volga Kanal)

16. The central directorate was in Moscow. This freight-passenger steamship company was highly favored and heavily subsidized by the government and operated between Moscow and Gorkiy. Some passenger ships of this company went from Moscow to as far as Astrakhan'.
17. The over-all transport capacity of this company was 4,000,000 tons per navigational year (15 April to 15 November). The fleet consisted of approximately 80 self-propelled ships, and 120 barges. This company was equipped with the best, most modern diesel ships and barges. The company began operation on the Moscow-Volga Canal shortly before World War II. There was no specific type of cargo transported; it dealt with practically all types of cargoes, according to existing needs.
18. The main industrial installations of the Moscow-Volga Canal Steamship Company were located in Moscow and Khimki. The annual gross output of these installations amounted to approximately 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 rubles.

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The Moscow-Oka Steamship Company (Moskovsko-Okskoye Parokhodstvo)

19. [redacted] the central directorate of this company [redacted] may have been in Moscow, Kaluga, or Gorkiy. This company operated the transport lines from Kaluga to Moscow to Gorkiy, and had a transport capacity of 2,000,000-2,500,000 tons per navigational year. Approximately 40 self-propelled freight-passenger ships and

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100 barges made up the fleet of this company. Cargoes generally consisted of grain, machinery, construction materials (bricks from Kaluga region), sand, etc. The ship repair yards were in Kaluga, and handled an annual gross output amounting to 15,000,000-18,000,000 rubles. Steamship companies mentioned in this and the succeeding paragraphs, 20 and 21, generally used old steam tugboats which were wood-fueled and had been manufactured in pre-Revolutionary times; barges were old, and mainly of wooden-hull construction.

The Belaya River Steamship Company (Bel'skoye Parokhodstvo)

20. This was a steamship company of only local significance operating on the Belaya River upstream to the Kama River. Its transport capacity was 1,000,000-1,500,000 tons per navigational year. Cargo consisted mainly of timber. The company possessed 25-30 self-propelled ships --- mainly tugs --- and 40 barges.

The Vyatka River Steamship Company (Vyatskoye Parokhodstvo)

21. This company operated on the Vyatka River, which is a tributary of the Kama. The main administration of this company was, presumably, in Korov. The company had a transport capacity of 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 tons per navigational year. Cargoes consisted mainly of timber, which was transported in 30 self-propelled ships and 50 barges.

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